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SOME PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

My deep interest in Mr. Lincoln came, first, of his manifestations of opposition to any further extension of slavery over the territories of the United States—an opposition in which I believe I shared as sincerely as any American; for, while a student and medical professor in Cincinnati, in the early fifties of the last century, I had oftentimes looked across the Ohio River to the shadows on the Kentucky side, and now and then, by sympathy, felt the smart of a driver's lash on Freedom's shore; there, too, had earnest part in forming the great political party solemnly sworn to resist extension of the damning curse of human bondage, and thence had gone out, as one of Freedom's advocates on more than a hundred 'stumps,' in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin.

Meanwhile, I had, with profound interest, so watched the masterly discussions of Mr. Lincoln with Douglas, in northern Illinois, and so marked him for his destiny, that, in the winter of 1858-9, being then in command of agricultural affairs in Wisconsin, I went down to Chicago to congratulate him and, if possible, secure him for delivery of the annual address at the next state fair, to be held at Milwaukee in September, 1859.

We spent half the night together, in his chamber, reviewing the past and outlining a possible, even probable future—an evening so deeply interesting that, after fifty years, the discussions and incidents are still almost fresh enough for recital in detail. Even then the dark clouds of a coming conflict hovered near enough to make one anxious; but in the minds

of both, even civil war, with carnage widespread and fearful, seemed not so dreadful as a further extension of human slavery over half a continent by consent of possessors whose immediate ancestors had themselves been freed from British oppression, not half so terrible, at great cost of blood and treasure. There was yet hope that the resolute champions of the curse would stay their demands, but the prospect was sadly faint, for even then the need of preparing for the worst was painfully felt.

I need hardly say that my conviction of the greatness of Mr. Lincoln, already gained by a reading of his discussions of the all-engrossing questions of the time, was yet further deepened by that night's experience and study of the homely, robust statesman before me, and that, with a glad heart I bore away, at midnight, his promise to be with us, in Milwaukee, at the appointed time.

When, at the moment of departure, he was asked to let me know the time of his leaving Chicago, so that I could meet him on his arrival in Milwaukee, he merely said, with his characteristic simplicity: "Oh, don't trouble yourself on my account; I'll be at the Newhall in good time, all right." And so he was, some eight months later.

But it so happened that his actual arrival was at midnight, and that the room intended to be reserved for him had, by the blunder of a clerk, been given to a man and his wife who were already in bed and asleep. There was no remaining vacant room in the house, and the clerk, having been stoutly arraigned by the landlord, was in distress of mind; seeing which, Mr. Lincoln, with a smiling countenance and comforting words, said: "Oh, my dear sir, don't be unhappy on my account. I see there is vacant space enough right here, at the end of the counter. Just bring a cot and clothes-rack, with sheet for a screen, and I'll sleep like a top." The thing was done, and the distinguished guest, after a cheerful and hearty "Good-night, gentlemen," handsomely retired.

Of course I was prompt to fulfill my promise to come down in good time to breakfast with him, but he was a little tardy, so that when, having heard a little stir behind the screen, I

ventured to tap gently on the frame, word came out at once, "Come in!" But, on passing 'round, I found him not only half dressed, but shaving himself, and so encumbered that, instead of moving his chair for a greeting of his visitor, having recognized my voice, he turned his head squarely back and saw me, with his lathered face inverted and considerably broadened by a smile. Of course I was quick to retire and wait.

The breakfast disposed of, we were soon on our way to the Fair grounds, for Mr. Lincoln said he wanted to see what sort of farmers, gardeners, and mechanics the Badgers made.

The address was to be at 11:00, and meanwhile we made ourselves very busy, going the rounds of all the departments. It soon became apparent that, notwithstanding his modest disclaimer of knowing much of practical affairs besides wood-chopping and rail-splitting, he did know much of many things in country life; that he was in fact capable of critical judgment of horses, cattle, sheep, and other domestic animals, as well as of most products of the soil.

The address was listened to by many thousands, some say thirty thousand, not a few of whom had made special efforts and sacrifices that they might see and hear the man who, from the depths of poverty and laborious service in wood and field, had risen to a foremost place in the legal profession and in statesmanship. Perhaps no address more practical, useful, and entertaining was ever delivered on any such occasion. It dealt with the necessary relation between education and labor, as well as with the economy of thorough work in farming especially, and was so enlivened by humorous hits that it was at once highly entertaining and of enduring value. It was in fact so admirable, and so deepened my conviction of his eminent fitness for leadership, that then and there I began to speak of him as the man for next President of the United States—fit for a superior service in statesmanship at any time, but pre-eminently fit for such a crisis as then seemed surely very near—in due time I went to Chicago, to help nominate him, and thereafter gave myself to platform service in many of the Northern states, and to the end of the campaign.

How nobly, how grandly he transcended the highest expectations of his most sanguine admirers is too well known for historic proof. No greater demand for a national guide and guardian was ever made, or more nobly and wonderfully met in any part of the world. It is certain that, for measure of endowment and balance of powers, the supreme founder and father of the Republic alone can be compared with Lincoln, its preserver and the emancipator of millions of a down-trodden and most wretched race.

Intellectually, Mr. Lincoln was remarkable for the habit of close and critical attention to whatever engaged his thought; for such power of discrimination and comparison as made him clear-headed; such power of logical analysis as made him quick to detect a flaw and expose a fallacy, on which account his opponent in debate oftentimes found himself floundering ere he knew he was on the wrong side, and painfully subject to such withering sarcasm, if he deserved it, as Mr. Lincoln knew so well how to use; remarkable also for such readiness to discover the relations of things as made him far-sighted and hence either courageous, even bold and daring, or prudent, as the occasion might justify or demand.

On the side of the sensibilities I was happy to find, after a further acquaintance, that I had myself underrated him. His rugged, stalwart frame was at first suggestive of a probable sternness of spirit and manner. But, as I came nearer, I was charmed by the delicacy, even tenderness, and all-abounding sympathy of a great and beautiful soul—qualities that made him a lover of the beautiful in nature; that prompted him, on entering the great round tent at the Wisconsin State Fair, with its magnificent display of fruits and flowers, to take off his hat, for a salute, with a grace that won the hearts of all who were present, saying: "How beautiful! Eden transferred!;" that made him too glad for utterance when he signed the immortal Emancipation Proclamation and saw the shackles fall from millions of his fellow-men, and again when, after one of the most fearful conflicts in human history, he knew the Republic saved and foresaw a Union grander and more glorious

than had been dreamed of in all the past, a thing of destiny; qualities, too, that made him so impressionable by others, so sensitive in soul, that he almost never failed to judge rightly the men with whom he had to do, and enabled him to draw into the service of his country so great a galaxy of men of genius, devotion, and heroic virtue.

Morally, Mr. Lincoln was nothing less than an embodiment of virtue, truth, and justice. Those who knew him best believed him incapable of wilful wrong. He so loved truth that he was ever in earnest search of it, and anxious to make it known; and it was the cherishing of a profound love of justice, and his exalted aims and aspirations that made him ever ready, even glad, to do and die for his country.

As for the will, he was resolution itself—never halting or hesitating in his course. Because he felt himself right, and knew the right must win, there was fixedness of purpose. He never just hoped for a final victory; he saw it coming, and, though deeply sad over the dreadful fate of so many martyrs, yet, after all, whenever the future of the Republic was referred to, his noble face was illumined. It was this high assurance of a determined soul that made it easy for him to say to me, one dark morning, when I had gone to the White House, with anxious sympathy, because great armies of Confederate troops had boldly crowded into Pennsylvania and were threatening both Harrisburg and Philadelphia, "Never mind, Dr. Hoyt, you may be sure we'll trot them out of there very soon and make them glad to get home again."

It was this fixedness of purpose and his unfailing confidence that enabled him to preserve his calmness, so that he was rarely disturbed in spirit and never really agitated. His face and voice and daily life were ever giving expression to an unwavering trust in God.

And thus it is that we are amply justified in pronouncing Abraham Lincoln one of the very noblest and grandest of men in all human history.

Washington, D. C.

